



## **Frequently Asked Questions about Digital Certificates**

**Q: Will my digital certificate expire?**

A: Yes. Digital certificates expire after one year and cannot be renewed. Each year, you can apply for a new digital certificate.

**Q: How do I know when my digital certificate will expire?**

A: NHSN will notify you via email 30 days prior to your digital certificate's expiration date. This email will include instructions on how to proceed, including the website and password.

NOTE: You should not apply for a new digital certificate prior to receiving the notification from NHSN.

**Q: What if I don't apply for a new digital certificate after my current digital certificate has expired?**

A: That's okay. You can still apply for a new digital certificate, using the website and password included in the email from NHSN. Once a digital certificate has expired, however, you will not be able to access NHSN until a new digital certificate is installed.



**Q: Can I use my current digital certificate while the application for my new digital certificate is pending?**

A: No. Once you have applied for a new digital certificate, your expiring digital certificate will no longer work. You should receive your new digital certificate within 48-72 hours of applying.

**Q: I have received an email from the Secure Data Network (SDN) with my digital certificate, but I don't remember how to install it. Where can I find instructions?**

A: Instructions for installing a digital certificate can be found in the NHSN User Start-up Guide, Step 3d.

**Q: Do I have to create a new challenge phrase?**

A: No, you are not required to create a new challenge phrase. You can use the same challenge phrase from your expired digital certificate.

**Q: My application for a digital certificate has been denied. What do I do?**

A: Contact NHSN at [nhsn@cdc.gov](mailto:nhsn@cdc.gov) or 800-893-0485, option 1.